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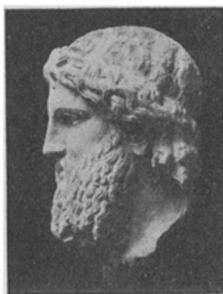
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To us, however, its chief interest lies in the fact that it is a copy, and the only one now known in sculpture, of the head of Pheidias's great statue of the Olympian Zeus. It has always been regarded as a curious fact, not easy to explain, that although that statue was unquestionably the most famous work of antiquity, no copy of it had survived to our time. Most of the familiar heads of Zeus are of a distinctly later type, and of a wholly different style of art from that of Pheidias, and our knowledge of the character of the head of his Olympian statue was limited to what could be learned from the meagre descriptions of it in ancient writers, — who seem to have been chiefly impressed by its mild countenance, — and from the representation of it on a late coin of Elis. For the sake of comparison a drawing of that coin and a profile view of our head are reproduced side by side below, and the resemblance speaks for itself. Too much accuracy of detail is not to be expected from so small an object as a coin, yet we find the same calm, placid character in the face, the same low brow, with the hair carried in gentle waves along the cheek and falling in curls behind the ears; the moustache falls in the same manner about the mouth, and in the coin as well as in the marble the beard appears to have been modelled in parallel wavy lines, slightly reminiscent of the archaic period. Our head, however, is not to be regarded as an exact copy of the Olympian, since it displays certain characteristics in the modelling which, as stated above, belong unmistakably to the fourth century. These show that the sculptor modified the type somewhat to conform to the taste of his own age, notably in the softness of the skin and the tendency towards effeminacy in the expression. Nevertheless, in spite of these shortcomings, it brings us nearer to the original than any work yet known, and is therefore a most valuable possession for the Museum.



The New Velazquez.

The Committee on the Museum makes the following statement with regard to the Velazquez

portrait, believed to represent Philip IV. of Spain, now hung in the First Picture Gallery :

The purchase of the picture was authorized by the Committee by cable of September 27, 1904, to Dr. Denman W. Ross, a member of the Committee, then in Madrid, in response to a cable from Dr. Ross, stating the offer of the picture, and its high quality. The purchase was made by Dr. Ross, after examination of the picture and comparison of it with others by Velazquez in the Prado, upon the evidence which the painting itself afforded of its beauty and genuineness.

An attack on the genuineness of the picture was made in an anonymous communication received by the Museum in the month of November. The Committee has endeavored to obtain the name of the writer without success.

The picture has since been submitted to a number of painters and critics of painting, both of New York and Boston, who are entitled to be considered judges in such a matter by reason of their familiarity with and study of the works of Velazquez. Their testimony — with a single exception — is unanimous and strong in favor of the genuineness of the work.

The Committee on the Museum believes the picture to be genuine, and considers the Museum fortunate in its possession. It has assigned the picture as a purchase from the fund bequeathed to the Museum by the late Sarah Wyman Whitman.

Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the Museum.

OKAKURA-KAKUZO.

The importance of the collection of Japanese and Chinese paintings in the Museum has been recognized for many years by students of Oriental art. Personally I have had opportunities in the past to know certain of its great treasures, but it is only upon examining it since last March that I begin to realize its preëminent place among the Oriental collections in the world. I do not now hesitate to say that in point of size it is unique, and that in quality it can only be inferior to the Imperial Museums of Nara and Kioto; while for the schools of Tokugawa painting it is unrivalled anywhere. In face of these facts I wonder that the collection has not hitherto received more general attention, or become the object of the serious consideration that it warrants.

Among the earliest Japanese paintings we have a Hokke-mandara of the eighth century, bearing an inscription to say that it was repaired by Chinkai (a celebrated monk-painter), in the year 1148. Paintings of the eighth century being extremely rare, there being, perhaps, only a dozen